

CONFIDENTIAL

INFORMATION REPORT

DATE DISTR. 13 July 1954

NO. OF PAGES 2

25X1

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

25X1

25X1

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. It is my opinion that in general the USSR had not overcome the climatic problems which restricted most road building to gravel and earth type roads. Road construction in the USSR in 1941 was not any more mechanized than it was before the Russian Revolution, except that trucks were used in construction work instead of only horses. Mechanized equipment, which consisted of steam rollers, was available only for city streets and such highways as those from Moscow to Minsk and Moscow to Kiev. There were some graders, but they were not used and it was not known how to use them, because there was a lack of sufficiently powerful tractors for road construction work to tow the graders. In Central Asia in 1941 all the roads were still either dirt or gravel, except for a few stretches paved with cobblestones. However, the highways emanating from Moscow were hard surface concrete roads (asphalto-betonii dorogi).
2. The main problem of road construction confronting Soviet engineers in Central Asia was lack of mechanized equipment. In the Central USSR, the main difficulty was obtaining the necessary materials. Stone was in short supply and it was necessary to transport it from distant areas. The railroads, overburdened as they were, could not carry great quantities of stone. There was also a lack of sufficient mechanized equipment for road construction in the Central USSR.

CLASSIFICATION

CONFIDENTIAL

DISTRIBUTION

ORE - 15

57

25X1

25X1

CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

3. In regard to steps taken to provide roads throughout the USSR, the Soviet authorities did not have the incentive to build many roads because there was a shortage of motor vehicular transport.
4. Overall planning, by GOSPLAN, for road systems was done only for "government" roads, and some "Republican" routes, not for local roads. "Government" roads were those considered of significance for all the USSR. A "Republican" road would be included in overall planning only if it was thought to have all-Union importance. In this case, the central government would provide the necessary materials, but the local republican authorities would have to pay for them. Local roads in Central Asia were few in number and poor in quality, as were the bridges (there was a great shortage of wood in Central Asia). Local GOSPLANS in the various republics planned roads of local significance. Republican authorities provided the road building materials which they had available, but had to ask Moscow for certain items, such as nails. The "RaiSoviet" (Rayon Soviet) administered the local roads through its DOROZHNIK (Dorozhnik Otdel--Road Section).
5. The Soviet Government had planned to increase greatly the use of trucks for hauling freight, but ran into difficulties. The great number of horses lost during collectivization, the growth of industry, and the neglect of railway construction in the 1930's, were all important factors in increasing very sizeably the demand for trucks. The USSR was unable to come even close to producing the planned amount of trucks and new roads. By 1941 there were only about 550,000 motor vehicles in the USSR. Approximately 420,000 of this total were trucks; the remainder were automobiles. This was grossly inadequate.
6. In regard to whether standard methods were followed in road construction, the quality of work in this field was generally so poor that even the government suggested that each contractor attempt to improve methods in any manner he could.
7. In regard to road equipment and maintenance of roads, there was no mechanized equipment in Central Asia, except that trucks were used on construction jobs. Occasionally one might be able to borrow a steam roller. Once a "government" road was completed, a "Dorozhniye Upravleniye" (Road Administration) would be created, which hired workers to maintain the road by hand labor. As to maintenance of local routes, bridges on these roads would often be allowed to remain impassable for a month, because of the shortage of wood for repairs.

- end -

LIBRARY SUBJECT & AREA CODES

754.5	N
754.22	N
754.22	527N
754.11	N
754.32	N
4-6/743.221	N
5-6/743.221	N

CONFIDENTIAL

25X1